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INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

ACTIONS OF CONGRESS

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THE ACTION OF CONGRESS
IN REGARD TO
THE PIEGAN INDIANS OF MONTANA.

THE Executive Committee of THE INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION calls public attention to the following facts in relation to the *insufficient appropriations for the Piegan Indians, and the suffering and loss of life consequent thereon.*

OFFICIAL STATEMENT.

(The following is taken from the report of the Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1884, pages iv. v.)

"The newspapers of the country have been full of complaints for months past, because certain Indians at the extreme northern agencies were suffering for food, and by inference the cause of this suffering was attributable to neglect on the part of this office; while, on the contrary, the suffering of these Indians for lack of food was attributable *directly* and *entirely*, first, to the fact that the appropriations for them were not made until three months after they should have been made; and second, that when made, the amount allowed was less than was asked for by this office, and consequently insufficient for the absolute wants of these Indians. The Blackfeet, Blood, and Piegan Indians, and those at Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Agencies, were driven to great straits to sustain life during the winter and spring of 1883 and 1884, being compelled to kill many of their horses and young stock cattle for food, and to resort to every possible expedient, such as eating bark, wild roots, &c., and there is little doubt that many deaths among them were the direct result of lack of food. Through-

out their severest trials, however, I am glad to be able to say that they have been guilty of very few acts of lawlessness or depredation."

(The Commissioner here states that the entire disappearance of game has in their condition compelled them to depend for the present on Government support.)

"Much has been done by them during the past year in digging irrigating ditches, fencing and breaking fields, building dwelling-houses, &c., and they are, with few exceptions, diligently and patiently struggling for independence; and there is good reason to hope that, with proper assistance, in a few years each household will own a team and have enough land under cultivation, which, with a few stock cattle, will be sufficient to make a great majority of them nearly independent. In view of all these circumstances, I believe that there has never been a time in the history of these tribes when judicious assistance and encouragement from the Government would have been so beneficent to them as at present.

"I have called attention to these things before, and now do so again, with the hope that Congress may see the necessity of making appropriations for the Indian service, as to *time* and *quantity*, so as to prevent in the future all just complaints of this character."

LETTER FROM MONTANA.

Professor Charles C. Painter, the representative of the Indian Rights Association at Washington, visited the Piegan Indians in the early fall of 1884 at the instance of the Association, and personally investigated their condition. The following letter to Dr. James E. Rhoads, vice-president, is his report to the Association.

"FT. SHAW, MONT., October 28th, 1884.

"DEAR DR. RHOADS:—I got in here last night on my way back from the Piegan Agency, and could not get out on the

stage as it was full, and so am taking a needed but enforced rest before taking an all night and day stage ride to Helena.

"I have just written Commissioner Price as follows:—'I have just returned from the Piegan Agency, and take the liberty of saying that if the food now on hand, and yet on its way thither under the Keyes contract and Powers special contract, is to be exhausted as per your instructions on the 31st of March, there is great danger of starvation after that date, before more food can be sent in.

"The roads are now in prime condition, dry and hard, yet my light wagon cut in to the hubs in several places. As I came down I met freight wagons, loaded with flour, which were stuck in alkaline flats between Dupuyer and Muddy creeks. I saw twenty-six mules on a single wagon unable to haul it out, and the men busy with shovels trying to dig out. Unless the season should be unusual, it will be all but impossible to get wagons through after the 1st of January until the first or middle of June. Either more food must be started at once, after Congress meets, or the supplies must be issued with great caution, or the experiences of last winter, spring, and summer must be repeated, an experience terrible to those who endured it; heartrending to those who witnessed or even hear it, and disgraceful to those responsible for it, the details and proportions of which can scarcely be exaggerated.

"I wish to say also that so far as you base calculations on the twenty thousand pounds of corn recently delivered by Powers, under special contract, you must deduct at least fifty per cent. from the estimate if made on the supposition that it is good. If I know nothing else, I do know something about corn, and do not consider its food value to be more than twenty-five per cent. grade corn. I do not believe it would germinate if planted; it is chaffy, light, and musty. I met Captain Mole on his way up to inspect it, and of course do not know what he will say of it, but I know its purchase, even if good, is a mistake, there being no mill to grind it, and it is not needed for the stock. Cooked in the grain, but little of it would be assimilated.

"Allow me to suggest that, if the agent could have had a

few large caldrons or soup kettles, he could have greatly increased the value of his meagre supplies last year. Issued daily as such, its nourishing quality would have been greatly increased, and there would have been no waste.

“The suffering at Belknap would have been as great, from all I can learn, as at Badger Creek if there had not been a large number of soldiers at Fort Assiniboine. I have taken the sworn testimony of two citizens, one of whom was in the employ of the Diamond B., and the other of the Post, as driver, a man who took me to Piegan, and has been with me for the past six days, whom I believe to be a truthful man.

“These men independently declare and swear that the Indians brought their squaws and daughters, even very young girls, and hired them to white men for base purposes for money with which they bought food from the Post trader; that they have seen themselves cases, more than fifty in number, of fathers taking money from men who took their female children, and they could hear their screams from the teepees and bushes under the brutal usage they were receiving.

“I wish, Mr. Commissioner, you could go over the ground and know fully the situation. Perhaps it only tortures you, knowing, as I do, how your hands are tied, but you could speak of these things more intelligently and with greater emphasis.

“Of course I write this to you privately. I hope to see you soon after Congress meets, and speak more fully.

“Yours Truly, &c.,

“C. C. PAINTER.”

PUBLIC LETTER FROM CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION.

“PHILADELPHIA, December 23d, 1884.

“DEAR SIR:—Your immediate attention is respectfully called to the enclosed communications, which, taken in relation to each other, will be readily understood. The Chairman

of the Sub-Committee of the House on Indian Appropriations, Hon. John Ellis, has failed to comply with a distinct promise made by him to a delegation of the Indian Rights Association. The result of this action has placed in extreme jeopardy the lives of many of the Montana Indians. So far as we can now gather from Professor Painter's personal investigations, upwards of four hundred of these people died, during the past season, of starvation, owing to the failure of Congress to appropriate supplies in time. Unless prompt action be taken there is grave danger of a recurrence of this sad state of affairs. These facts should be known to the public. Personal letters, addressed to Hon. Samuel J. Randall, Chairman of the Committee of the House on Appropriations, and to Hon. John Ellis, Chairman of Sub-Committee on Indian Appropriations, asking an explanation of this matter, will be very valuable. Action, to be effective, must be prompt.

" Respectfully,

" HERBERT WELSH,

" *Corresponding Secretary I. R. A.*"

" INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION,

" OFFICE, NO. 1316 FILBERT STREET,

" PHILADELPHIA, PA., December 13th, 1884.

" DEAR SIR:—I write to you concerning a matter of great importance, and one deserving instant attention. A Committee of the Indian Rights Association, composed of Clement M. Biddle, General S. C. Armstrong, Robert Frazer, Professor Painter, and Herbert Welsh, on Friday, December 12th, 1884, waited on the Indian Appropriation Committee of the House. Of this Committee Mr. Ellis of Louisiana is Chairman. Our object was to present some practical suggestions as to Indian appropriations for the coming year, so as to influence in the right direction the work of this Committee, and thereby increase the efficiency of the whole Indian service. It is not necessary for me to dilate upon the vital importance of this move on our part. Before waiting on the Committee the

members of our delegation met at the Ebbitt House, and arranged our work in two parts: *First*, a brief set of suggestions, classified under four heads. *Second*, an amplification of the foregoing, backed by reason for which the suggestions had been made. The points contained in our first paper were as follows: I. Request for an appropriation of \$50,000, to be made immediately available to meet the wants of the starving Indians of Montana. II. Increased appropriations for schools; \$175 per pupil necessary (exclusive of transportation) for first-class industrial training. Every Indian child should immediately be placed in school. III. Such an increase of agents' salaries as will enable the Department to obtain and retain high-grade men. IV. Increased pay for Indian police, and sufficient pay for judges of courts of Indian offenses.

"At first our efforts to gain a hearing from Mr. Ellis seemed likely to be unsuccessful, but at last we gained an audience from him and Mr. Ryan. I was chosen to speak for our Committee. All of us were surprised at the result of this interview. Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan, who at first seemed hardly disposed to give us a hearing, manifested such interest in what we had to say that our conference, instead of lasting but a few moments, was prolonged for more than an hour. As to the question of the starving Indians of Montana, both Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan said that so soon as the recommendation of Mr. Price for appropriation of \$50,000 reached their Committee from the *Treasury Department*, through which the law required it first to pass, they would act upon it instantly. In two days after that the matter should be finished. Mr. Ellis said the starvation of the Montana Indians last year was an 'infamy.' We felt that the position of the Committee on this point was altogether a strong one, and that it was necessary for us to press Mr. Price's recommendation through the Treasury Department.

"Regarding the question of agents' salaries, both Mr. Ryan and Mr. Ellis admitted that there should be an increase in order to secure efficient men; but they thought there would be opposition to such an effort in the House. Regarding the second point, these gentlemen favored \$175 per pupil appro-

priated annually for the high-grade industrial schools. On the final points, touching an increase of salaries for Indian police force, I think there was a disposition on the part of the Committee to allow things to remain as they were. I told them how valuable the police had proved under Agent McGillicuddy, at Pine Ridge, and that their efficiency probably saved an outbreak. I think this statement produced its effect.

"The attitude assumed by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan towards us was all that we could desire. It was one of intelligent interest. I think they recognized that our statements were those of men who spoke from personal experience, and who were thoroughly able to substantiate their assertions. During our conversation Mr. Ellis asked me whether I was an Indian Inspector, or whether I had any official position? I replied that I was only a citizen of the United States, and had no personal ends to serve. I think he was satisfied that the aim of our Committee was disinterested.

"Mr. Ellis thanked us for our statement, and said that he was always glad to receive information on such matters.

"The members of the Indian Committee likewise expressed a willingness to do all in their power to suppress traffic in liquor with the Indians.

"We placed our full statement in writing in the hands of the Committee.

"Let me add a word of suggestion at the conclusion of this letter. The real value of this journey to Washington will depend largely on the amount and kind of publicity given to it. The amount of attention paid to our suggestions by the members of this Committee (suggestions which are in themselves of the highest moment) will depend on what the papers and the public say regarding them. I believe Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan are sincerely desirous of carrying the suggestions into effect, but they should be supported by public opinion. Will you not kindly try to get these facts in those papers which are accessible to you? Editors of our daily papers have been most valuable allies in recording and commenting upon each step of progress in our work. They will render us an inesti-

mable service by drawing public attention to this great question of Indian Appropriations, which is one of immediate and vital importance.

“Very Respectfully Yours,

“HERBERT WELSH,

“*Corresponding Secretary I. R. A.*

“N. B.—*Personal* letters addressed to Mr. Ellis, as Chairman, or to other members of the Sub-Committee of the House on Indian Affairs, urging the adoption of enclosed suggestions, will be especially valuable. Action should be taken with the utmost promptitude.”

“SUGGESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION, RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO HON. MR. ELLIS, CHAIRMAN OF SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE ON INDIAN APPROPRIATIONS.

“I. An appropriation of \$50,000, to be used by the Committee of Indian Affairs for relief of Montana Indians. Immediate action to be urged to prevent starvation.

“II. Adequate support for Indian schools. At the rate of \$175 and transportation per pupil in all first-class industrial training schools.

“Prompt action should be taken by Congress for the education of all Indian children.

“III. Agents' salaries should be increased so as to secure competent men as agents.

“IV. Increased pay for Indian police and judges of Indian courts.

“More stringent measures for the suppression of whisky traffic to the Indians.

“(Signed)

C. M. BIDDLE,

“ROBERT FRAZER,

“C. C. PAINTER,

“S. C. ARMSTRONG,

“H. WELSH,

“*Corresponding Secretary I. R. A.*

“DECEMBER 12TH, 1884.”

“WASHINGTON, D. C., December 18th, 1884.

“MY DEAR WELSH:—You remember that both Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan, who heard us by listening to our suggestions the other day, promised us that as soon as the deficiency estimate for the Montana Indians could be dislodged from the Department and brought to them they would introduce a joint resolution immediately and see that it was passed within two days.

“It would weary you to go over the vexatious delays and protracted efforts by which this dislodgment was effected; suffice to say that I got it to the Speaker of the House yesterday, late in the P. M. It was reported by him to the House, referred to Mr. Ellis’ Committee, and ordered to be printed.

“I saw both Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan after it came over, and they both explicitly promised again that they would act upon it this morning and put it through without delay.

“I also saw Mr. Dawes this morning, who said that he would take it at once, when it had passed the House, and put it through the Senate.

“I saw a fair ending to all my hard labors for these poor people. But hear the conclusion.

“I saw Mr. Ellis after the meeting of the Committee, and asked if he brought the matter before them. He said bluntly that he had not and would not. He had given them \$100,000 deficiency last winter, and he wanted to know what was done with it. He had given money for irrigating ditches, and seemed to think they might eat the ditches, I suppose, for certainly there was little chance that an appropriation for that purpose made last July could have yielded a crop for this winter’s supply.

“He wanted to know whom I represented, and thought the Indians had rather too many friends about here.

“Well, the matter seems settled. The agent has instructions to exhaust his supplies on the 31st of March. It will be too late to secure legislation now in time to avert the danger

that stares this poor people in the face. May God pity them !
An appeal must now be made to the country.

"Yours Truly,

"C. C. PAINTER,

*"Representative of the Indian Rights Association
at Washington, D. C."*

RESPONSIBILITY FOR STARVATION AMONG THE PIEGANS.

(An open letter to Mr. Ellis from Prof. Painter.)

"GREAT BARRINGTON, MASS., December 24th, 1884.

*"To the Hon. E. John Ellis, Chairman of Sub-Committee Indian
Appropriations, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

"SIR:—My surprise and astonishment were so great the other morning because of your sudden change of purpose regarding the "deficiency estimate" for the relief of certain Montana Indians, that I could not, in the brief time allowed me, answer your questions. You had only the evening before repeated to me the explicit promise made by you and Mr. Ryan to the Committee of the Indian Rights Association, on the 12th inst., that you would, just as soon as the estimate reached your Committee, introduce and secure the passage of a joint resolution appropriating the sum asked for.

"You were informed in the letter from the acting Secretary of the Interior, which accompanied this estimate, and which was referred with it to your Committee, that the agent at the Blackfeet Agency had been instructed by the Department to exhaust his supplies by the 31st of March, and that unless supplies to meet the deficiency were sent in by the 15th of January, that it would be all but impossible to get them in through that country in time to prevent starvation.

"Certainly nothing contained in this letter was calculated to lessen the urgency of the action which was sought from you, and which you had so explicitly promised.

"I fear that no importunity can now secure action in this matter which will save these poor people from extreme suffering, and it is not with the hope of averting this, but with the purpose rather of locating responsibility for it, that I proceed to answer your questions: (1.) How did it happen that there was such suffering among them; and (2.) what has become of the money (\$100,000) appropriated last winter for their relief?

"I. It appears that the Department asked for the support of these Indians (food and clothing), for the year ending June 30th, 1884, the sum of \$260,000, and that Congress, at the suggestion of your Committee, gave \$176,000, being \$84,000 less than the Department deemed necessary. It may be well to say in this connection that the sum asked for was based upon the expectation that game would be as abundant as in years past, which proved a mistake, as none was to be found.

"The deficiency created by the action of your Committee was \$84,000; the utter failure of all crops by reason of frost, drought, &c., and the entire absence of game, threatened this people with absolute starvation. Senator Vest and Delegate Maginnis reported this condition of things at the very opening of the last session of Congress. The President called the attention of Congress to the facts as communicated to him by the Secretary of the Interior, who asked for \$138,000 to meet the emergency. Special Inspector Howard appeared before your Committee and informed you of what he had just seen among these people, and you introduced a joint resolution the next day, appropriating \$50,000 to this purpose. The Senate amended this and appropriated \$100,000. If you are doubtful as to your responsibility for the non-concurrence of the House in this amendment, I will respectfully refer you to the *Congressional Record* for February 1st, 1884, pages 183 and 184. Mr. Maginnis related what he had seen and heard in a personal visit to these people a few months previous, and was sure that at least \$100,000 was both needed and asked for. Mr. Chase was confident that the Department had asked for \$138,000.

"Your assertion, made with great positiveness, and reiterated, that your Committee had given every dollar that had been asked for by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, caused the House to reject the Senate amendment, and a delay ensued before you were forced to correct a mistake which was fatal to many poor starving Indians, and so, after a delay of two months after it was informed of the facts, Congress appropriated about three-fourths of the sum asked for.

"That this was not sufficient appears from a mild statement in the last report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who says: 'There is little doubt that many deaths amongst them (these Montana Indians) were the direct result of lack of food.'

"During a recent visit to the Blackfeet Agency the agent informed me that he issued during the spring and early summer from four to six burial boxes per day for some time, and that no money would induce him to witness again the scenes through which he had passed during those fearful months. It was estimated that four hundred of the Indians of that Agency, which numbered not more than twenty-four hundred or twenty-six hundred, died from want of food.

"At Fort Belknap the suffering would have been just as great but for the fact that it is near a large military post, and that the men brought their wives and daughters—even little girls—and prostituted them to the whites for money with which to purchase food.

"This, I agree with you, is 'an infamy,' one for which, as Chairman of the Sub-Committee of Appropriations for Indian Affairs, who cut down estimates, who delayed action, and who has now deliberately refused to report a resolution appropriating for the deficiency for this year, the country will hold you responsible.

"The answer to your second question is not hard to find. Divide the sum of money appropriated to feed and clothe these people, fourteen thousand of them in round numbers, and you will have for this purpose about three and one-third cents per diem, per cap.; a sum which might be used honestly for such a purpose without raising such strong suspicions that it had been wasted that you are forced, as a

prudent public officer intrusted with grave responsibilities, to thrust aside with contempt the estimate of the Interior Department, and the urgent cry that there will be another 'infamy' unless you act at once, and say you must know how this has been expended before you will ask for any more.

"For the year ending June 30th, 1885, the Department asked for these same Indians, for food and clothing, \$275,000; acting under your advice, Congress has appropriated \$243,000; that is \$32,000 less than the needed sum.

"You have before you the facts that \$50,000 is needed to prevent the infamy of starvation again; that the supplies at one agency will be exhausted on the 1st of April next, and that the supplies must be sent in by the middle of January. Your promise to the Committee, composed of Gen. Armstrong, Messrs. Biddle, Welsh, and Frazer, of Philadelphia, was explicit that you would act upon these facts as soon as they reached your Committee. But this, the next morning after they did reach you, you flatly refused to do until you had satisfactory answers to your questions.

"These I have attempted to answer, whether satisfactory or not I cannot say, but with facts from the Official Record.

"Your argument that you had given money for irrigating ditches, and that these people ought to do something to support themselves, is fully met by the fact that this bill *was not approved until the 4th of July last*, and consequently practical relief for those whom it was designed to aid could not be derived in so short a time. Your remark that 'the Indian seems to have too many friends about here' betrays, I fear, the animus by which you are controlled. As all known methods for securing relief for these Indians from your Committee have been exhausted, I am forced to appeal to our citizens at large, who, I am confident, do not desire either that these people shall starve or be forced to prostitution to save themselves from such a fate, and so I send these answers to your questions to the country at large.

Yours, &c.,

(Copy)

C. C. PAINTER."

PETITION.

NO. 1316 FILBERT STREET,
PHILADELPHIA, PA., December 27th, 1884.

"Hon. Samuel J. Randall,

"SIR:—We, the undersigned, members of the Executive Committee of the Indian Rights Association, desire with all respect to call your attention to the following facts, and beg that you will give them immediate consideration.

"On Friday, December 12th, 1884, Clement M. Biddle, General S. C. Armstrong, Robert Frazer, Charles C. Painter, and Herbert Welsh, on behalf of the Indian Rights Association, waited on the Sub-Committee of the House on Indian Appropriations. The Chairman of this Committee, Hon. John Ellis, and the Hon. Thomas Ryan were present and listened to the statements presented by the above-named members of the Indian Rights Association. The principal request made on behalf of that Association, and the first presented along with three others, was that an appropriation of \$50,000 should be passed by Congress and immediately made available to relieve the threatened starvation among the Indians of Montana. We will here state for your information, that during the past spring and early summer, great destitution and loss of life was occasioned among the Piegans and other tribes of Indians resident in Montana, owing to the failure of Congress to appropriate money in sufficient amount and requisite promptness to meet their necessities. In his annual report for the year 1884, the Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs states that the destitution of these Indians, during the past winter and spring, was extreme, and admits that 'there is little doubt that many deaths were the direct result of lack of food.'

"Professor C. C. Painter, who, as a representative of the Indian Rights Association, visited Montana during the past month of October, states that upwards of four hundred deaths

resulted from starvation among the Indians. At Fort Belknap the Indians only saved themselves from a similar fate by the prostitution of their wives, daughters, and even young female children, to the whites. It is unnecessary for us to give you a description of these horrors, as we are led to believe that you have already in your possession a copy of Professor Painter's original statement regarding them. It was the earnest belief of the delegation of gentlemen from the Indian Rights Association that Commissioner Price's request for an appropriation of \$50,000 should be immediately granted, as supplies at the Piegan Agency will be exhausted by March 31st, 1885. After that date there will be great danger of starvation among the Indians, as the condition of the roads will prevent the hauling of freight to the Agency until June or July. We present these facts to you, in order that you may fully understand the gravity of the situation.

"When the request for this appropriation of \$50,000 (in order to meet the deficiency) was presented to Mr. Ellis and to Mr. Ryan, these gentlemen replied that so soon as the estimates from the Interior Department had passed through the Treasury Department, they would immediately act upon them, recommending a joint resolution by which the money might be made immediately available. Mr. Ellis stated that the starvation of the Montana Indians last winter was an infamy, and that he would do all in his power to prevent the threatened disaster during the coming season; that in two days after the estimates were through the Treasury Department all necessary action would have been taken. The members of the delegation from the Indian Rights' Association were entirely satisfied with the position taken by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan, and by the promise of immediate favorable action when the estimates were before their Committee. In view of this promise, so explicitly made, and which was given with such apparent sincerity, we, who now address you, must express astonishment, and, in the absence of any adequate explanation, a sense of deep indignation at the course which Mr. Ellis has since thought fit to adopt. The members of our delegation, believing that Mr. Ellis spoke in good faith, immediately ex-

erted themselves to fulfill their part of the contract. In this aim, thanks to the earnest and patient efforts of Professor Painter, they were successful. Professor Painter's own words, contained in a letter addressed to Herbert Welsh, under date of December 18th, 1884, will best depict the progress of events and the extraordinary position therein assumed by Mr. Ellis. The following is Professor Painter's letter:—

“ ‘ WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 18th, 1884.

“ ‘ MY DEAR WELSH:—You remember that both Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan, who heard us by listening to our suggestions the other day, promised us that as soon as the deficiency estimate for the Montana Indians could be dislodged from the Department and brought to them, they would introduce a joint resolution immediately and see that it was passed within two days.

“ ‘ It would weary you to go over the vexatious delays and protracted efforts by which this dislodgment was effected; suffice to say that I got it to the Speaker of the House yesterday, late in the P. M. It was reported by him to the House, referred to ‘Mr. Ellis’ Committee, and ordered to be printed.

“ ‘ I saw both Mr. Ellis and Mr. Ryan after it came over, and they both explicitly promised again that they would act upon it this morning, and put it through without delay. I also saw Mr. Dawes this morning, who said that he would take it at once, when it had passed the House, and put it through the Senate.

“ ‘ I saw a fair ending to all my hard labors for these people. But hear the conclusion.

“ ‘ I saw Mr. Ellis after the meeting of the Committee, and asked if he brought the matter before them. He said bluntly that he had not and would not. He had given them \$100,000 deficiency last winter, and he wanted to know what was done with it. He had given money for irrigating ditches, and seemed to think they might eat the ditches, I suppose, for certainly there was little chance that an appropriation for that purpose made last July could have yielded a crop for this winter's supply.

“ ‘ He wanted to know whom I represented, and thought the Indian had rather too many friends about here.

“ ‘ Well, the matter seems settled. The agent has instruc-

tions to exhaust his supplies on the 31st of March. To secure legislation now in time to avert the danger that stares this poor people in the face, an appeal must now be made to the country.

“‘Yours Truly,

“‘C. C. PAINTER.’

“In conclusion, sir, we desire to make an explicit statement regarding our position in this matter of Government support for Indians. We heartily approve, as a general policy, of a gradual diminution in the amount of rations given to Indians, and an increase in the means furnished them for becoming self-supporting, whereby they may in the shortest possible time be rendered independent of the Government. But in the case in question no adequate opportunity has been afforded these Indians to attain this end. The game on which they formerly subsisted has suddenly disappeared, and they have not had such instruction in civilized pursuits as will enable them to depend upon their own efforts for livelihood. We are of the opinion that it is alike an active justice to the Indians, and to the best interests of the country, to provide food for these people until a fair opportunity has been given them to provide for themselves.

“We feel constrained to say that the people of the United States, in our estimation, do not approve of any action upon the part of Congress by which these people, whom the nation is abundantly able to care for, shall be condemned to starvation or forced to save themselves from such a fate by the sacrifice of their innocent women and children to gratify the lust of degraded whites. Such a course the best men and women in this land will regard under present circumstances as indefensible, ignoble, and unworthy the honor of the nation. We, as citizens, utter our respectful and solemn protest against the action of Mr. Ellis. We not only hope but believe that you will aid us in making this protest effective ; that you will so use your legitimate influence with Mr. Ellis, as Chairman of your Sub-Committee, that he may be induced to reconsider his action, and thus secure the fulfillment of his promise, and, if

it be not now too late, the appropriation of the needed funds in time to avert the recurrence of starvation among the Indians of Montana.

"We remain, sir, with very great respect,

"Your obedient servants,

"DR. JAMES E. RHOADS, <i>Vice Pres.</i> ,	W. HEYWARD DRAYTON,
"JOHN WELSH,	W. W. FRAZIER, JR.,
"CHAS. E. PANCOAST,	CLEMENT M. BIDDLE,
"ROBERT FRAZER,	EFFINGHAM B. MORRIS,
"HENRY S. PANCOAST,	THOS. STEWARDSON,
"J. T. JOHNSON,	J. RODMAN PAUL,
"C. STUART PATTERSON,	HERBERT WELSH."

This appeal is now made in the public statement of the above facts.

DECEMBER 27th, 1884.

JANUARY 6th, 1885.

The following telegram was received this date by the Executive Committee:—

"WASHINGTON, D. C., January 6th, 1885.

"*To Robert Frazer, 209 South Third Street,*

"Fifty thousand dollars just appropriated by House for immediate use for support of Indians at Crow, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, and Blackfoot agencies.

(Signed) "CHAS. O'NEILL."

(From NEW YORK TRIBUNE, January 7th, 1885.)

“FOOD FOR THE STARVING PIEGANS.

“By Telegraph to *The Tribune*.

“WASHINGTON, January 6th, 1885.

“The Piegan Indians in Montana who have survived the starvation process to which they have been subjected by the refusal of Congress, at its last session, to appropriate money enough to provide for their subsistence, are to be fed. The House Committee on Appropriations this morning suddenly and unanimously awoke to the necessity of prompt action, and instructed Mr. Ellis to report and ask the House to pass a joint resolution appropriating \$50,000 to be immediately available for the purchase of subsistence stores for the destitute Indians in Montana. In presenting the resolution to the House Mr. Ellis said that the appropriation was urgently recommended by the Secretary of the Interior, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Indian agents in Montana, and the officers of the army stationed in the vicinity of the Indians. Mr. Ellis said that there were fifteen thousand of the destitute Indians, and that “hundreds of them have starved absolutely to death” on account of the failure of Congress to appropriate an adequate sum of money for their subsistence. He did not mention, however, what every careful reader of *The Tribune* knows to be the fact, that a sufficient sum was asked by the Indian Bureau a year ago, and that the House reduced the amount. That the Appropriations Committee had only to ask in order to have the appropriation granted was shown by the fact that the House unanimously adopted the joint resolution without debate.”

(TRIBUNE Editorial.)

"Friends of the Piegans will doubtless be able to take steps now to prevent these poor Indians from starving. Congress has suddenly realized their needs, and has appropriated \$50,000 to buy them food. Credit can certainly be obtained on the strength of the vote, and the purchase of the supplies must be hastened by all possible means. There is no use, perhaps, to inquire at this time why this matter did not receive attention before. The unanimous consent of the House to the resolution from the Committee on Appropriations indicates that the Representatives generally have no wish to starve the Indians to death. Somebody has evidently been suddenly stirred up, and the process was undoubtedly hastened by the praiseworthy activity of the Indian Rights Association."

THE SENATE.

(Telegram from Senator Bayard.)

"WASHINGTON, D. C., January 7th, 1885.

"*Hon. John Welsh, 304 Walnut street,*

"Joint resolution to relieve Piegans has just passed.

"T. F. BAYARD."

JANUARY 9th, 1885.

